DARK HORSE COMICS
18
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DARK HORSE COMICS

ALIENS: ALIEN
ARCUDI - MENDOZA

STAR WARS: DROIDS
THORSLAND - HUGHES - MUSHYNSKY

PREDATOR: THE HUNTED CITY
MOORE - GREGORY - RODRIGUEZ

DARK HORSE #18 COMICS

ALIENS: ALIEN 1

PART 2 OF 3
SCRIPT: JOHN ARCUDI
ART: PAUL MENDOZA
LETTERER: VICKIE WILLIAMS
COLORS: JAMES SINCLAIR

PREDATOR: THE HUNTED CITY 9

PART 3 OF 3
SCRIPT: CHARLES MOORE
PENCILS: D. ALEXANDER GREGORY
SCOTT FISCHER
INKS: JASEN RODRIGUEZ
LETTERER: BILL PEARSON
COLORS: GREGORY WRIGHT

STAR WARS: DROIDS 17

PART 2 OF 3
SCRIPT: DAN THORSLAND
PENCILS: BILL HUGHES
INKS: ANDY MUSHYNSKY
LETTERER: BILL PEARSON
COLORS: PAMELA RAMBO

DARK HORSE COMMENTS 25

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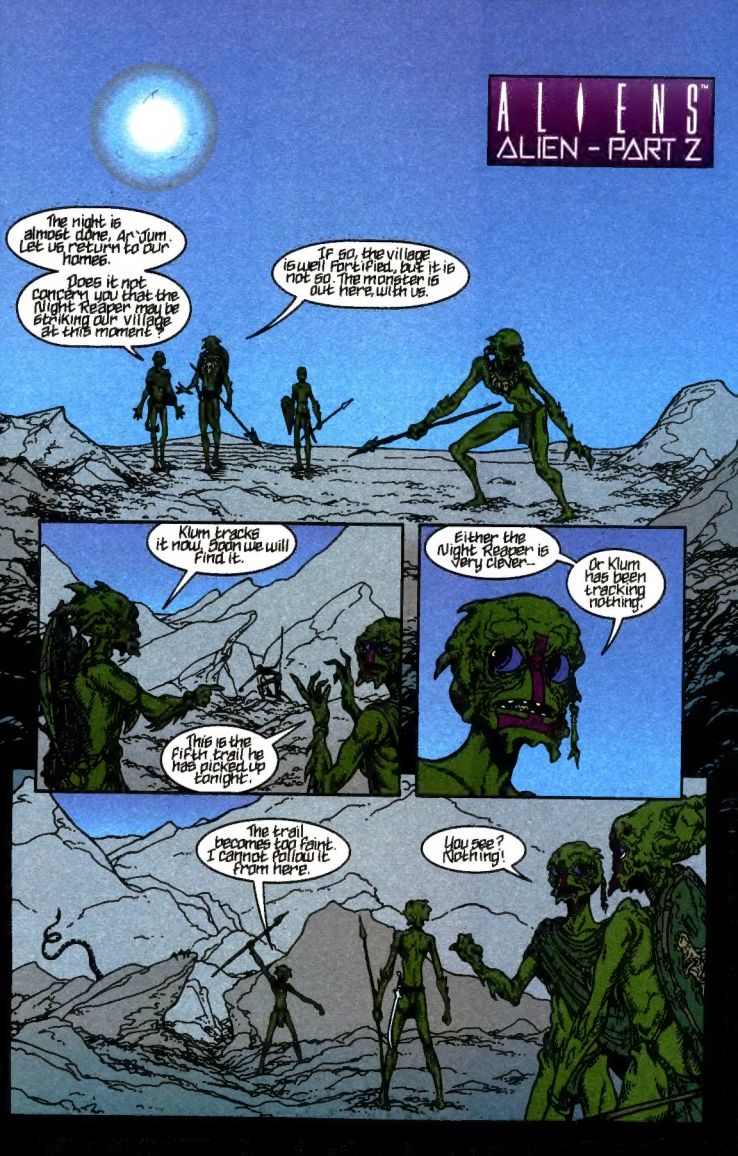

ALIENS
ALIEN - PART Z
The night is almost done, Ar'jum. Let us return to our homes.
Does it not concern you that the "Night Reaper" may be striking our village at this moment?
If so, the village is well fortified, but it is not so. The monster is out here, with us.
Klum tracks it now. Soon we will find it.
This is the fifth trail he has picked up tonight.
Either the Night Reaper is very clever...
Or Klum has been tracking nothing!
The trail becomes too faint. I cannot follow it from here.
You see? Nothing!

SSSSSSS
Yiiiiii!
It--it is the Night Reaper!
The time for identification is past, Suorn.
THE TIME HAS COME TO PROVE YOU ARE A MAN!
KILL THE BEAST!

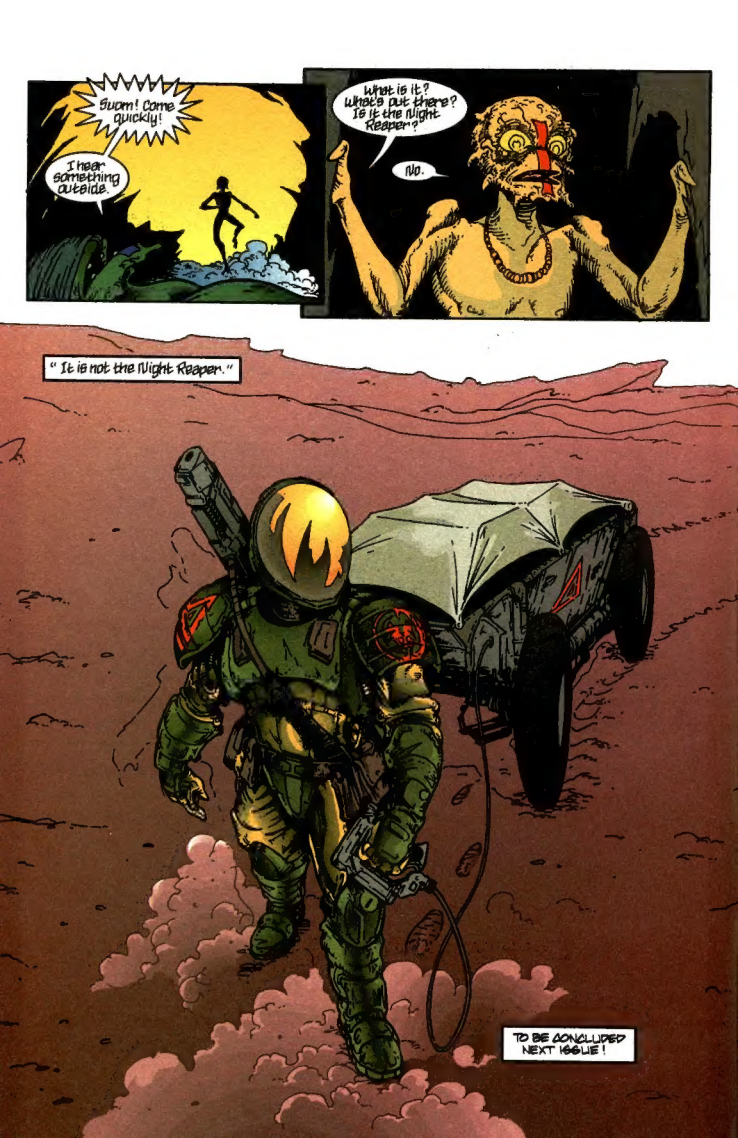
HUUUH!
HISSS!
HESSSSS!

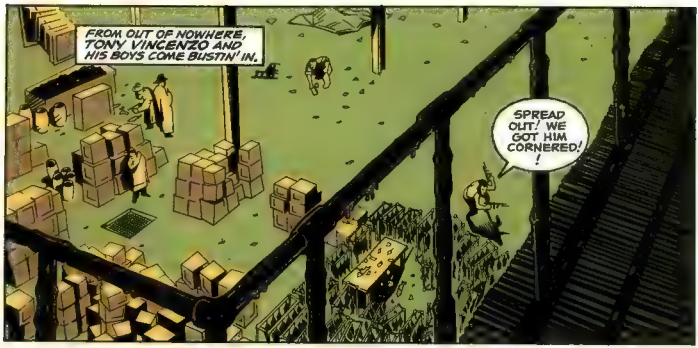
SECONDS.
Ohhhhhhelp me, Sloom... help me...
JUST A FEW SECONDS.
IS THIS THE SPAN OF MANHOOD?
...SSSoomm.
I'm here, Shiva. I'm right here.
Ooooou... did I kill it, boy? Is it dying?
I... I don't think so.
Then... get us away from here. Find shelter.

FIND SHELTER. A GOOD IDEA.
BUT ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO DO ON THE OPEN PLAIN.
ALMOST.
BUT NOT IMPOSSIBLE.
OOOO.. hurts.
It's all right. We're safe. I can tend your wounds, now.
SAFE?
SAFER, PERHAPS, MADE SAFER STILL BY GUOM'S VIGIL.
A VIGIL BORN NOT OF COURAGE, BUT OF FEAR, AND JUST A LITTLE HOPE.

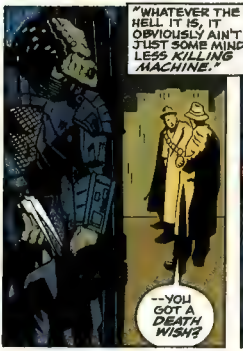
A HOPE THAT GROWS AS THE FEAR MELTS IN THE RAYS OF THE RISING SUN.
YAAAAHH
Huh?
what...
is...
this place?
Suom, are you there?
Right here, Shiva. How do you feel?
Very, very cold. Where are we?
I don't really know.

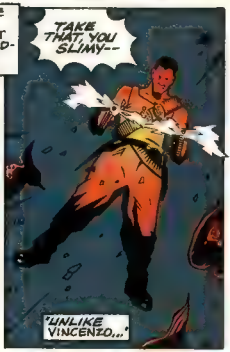
IT IS A STRANGE PLACE, THIS SHELTER.
FULL OF STRANGE THINGS.
THINGS THIS BOY HAS NEVER SEEN BEFORE.
AND THINGS BETTER LEFT UNSEEN.


Sworn! Come quickly!
I hear something outside.
What is it? What's out there? Is it the Night Reaper?
No.
" It is not the Night Reaper. "
TO BE CONCLUDED NEXT ISSUE!


FROM OUT OF NOWHERE, TONY VINCENZO AND HIS BOYS COME BUSTIN' IN.
SPREAD OUT! WE GOT HIM CORNERED!

"SAVIN' ME FROM THAT... THING."
WHERE'S LOU?
NOT A GRENADE, DUMBASS--


"WHATEVER THE HELL IT IS, IT OBVIOUSLY AIN'T JUST SOME MINDLESS KILLING MACHINE."
--YOU GOT A DEATH WISH?


TAKE THAT, YOU SLIMY--
"UNLIKE VINCENZO,..."

--DAMMIT! MORE F@%!&% FISH!!
EVENING POST
MAFIA HIT
THE HUNTED CITY
PART THREE OF THREE

--LOW
?
LOU!
TONY-! OVER HERE!
SHKOOM!
STUPID GUINEAS-- HE'S GETTIN' AWAY! LET'S GO, MAX. I NEED YOU.
LIKE HELL.
LOOK, UH,.. YOU GOTTA GET THE TRUTH OUT. MAKE SURE YOU GOT ENOUGH FILM.
CHECK IT!!

THE FEDS GOT ME WHEN I WAS ARRESTED. SPOOKY O.S.S. TYPES--MILITARY INTELLIGENCE.
THEY THINK THIS THING'S SOME KIND OF OUTER SPACE WHOOZIT. BIG SURPRISE, HUH?
BUT THEY WANT IT COVERED UP FOR NATIONAL SECURITY!
SO I ESCAPED BEFORE THEY COULD KILL ME. SOME GRATITUDE--I'M A @%!&# VETERAN!
GET NO RESPECT FROM NOBODY... NOT EVEN BERNIE. AND WE WAS PARTNERS BEFORE THE WAR--LIKE BLOOD.
I COME BACK A LITTLE 'DIFFERENT,' AND HE CROSSES ME--
YEAH, I GOT A LOT TO SETTLE, MAX.
"AND WITH THE RIGHT STORY, THE FEDS'LL GET THEIR PAYBACK. JUST LIKE BERNIE GOT HIS."
AND THIS IS THE LAST FIGHT I GOT TO FINISH!
YOU'RE REALLY TWISTED, YOU KNOW THAT?
NO, I AIN'T TWISTED, MAX--
--JUST A LITTLE BENT.
HEY! QUIT PUSHIN...

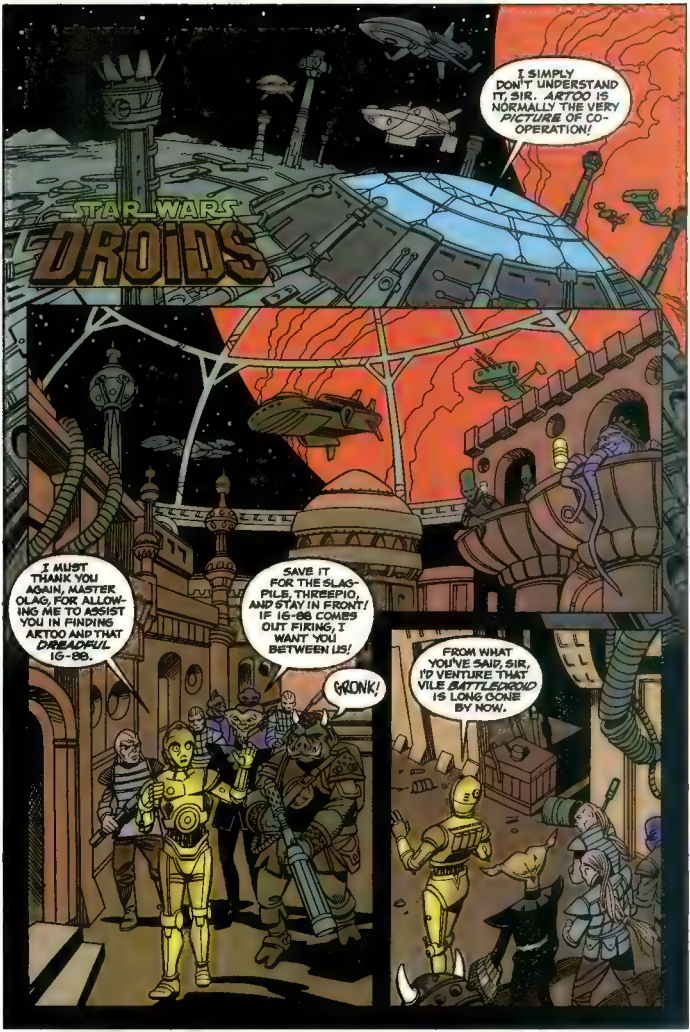
"DENT IS NOT EVEN THE WORD FOR YOU, VINCENZO.
"YOU'RE AN IDIOT.
SPWSSSH!
"ALL THAT ORDNANCE ON YA, YOU'LL SINK LIKE A STONE."
"OH WELL."
HRRRRRGH!
KNEW IT!
WHA-?
COULDN'T RESIST--
COULD YA?

F-KMP!
SKNCH
URK
MY KNIFE, MAX!
WHILE HE'S LOOKIN' AT THE CAMERA--

--GRAB THE KNIFE!
HRRGGG
SPKSH
NOW WHAT... WHUFF VINCENZO ....
HE'S WOUNDED ON THAT SIDE, MAX! WHERE I GOT HIM BEFORE!

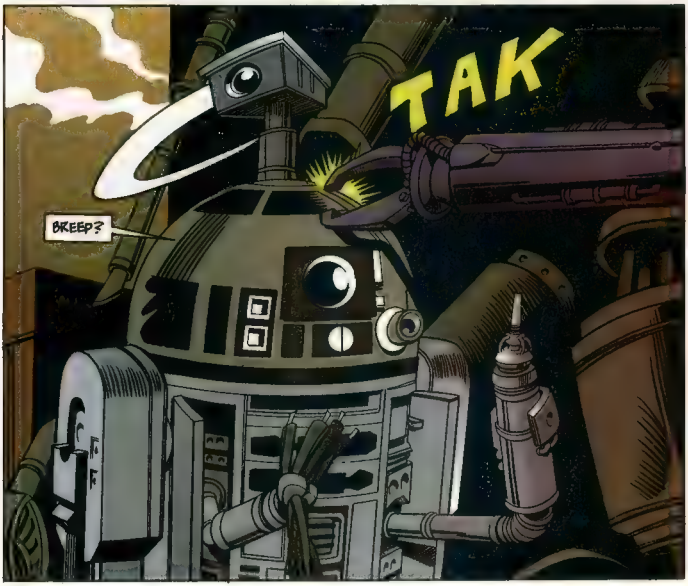
THE KNIFE, MAX! THE KNIIIFE!
"AGAIN WITH THE KNIFE. YOU'D THINK HE'D..."
...YOU'RE A DYING BREED... heh, heh, heh
PFWHOOM!
TELL ME, VINCENZO, THAT THING PUSHED YOU AWAY TO GET AT ME. YOU KNOW WHY, DON'T YOU?
THEY'RE ATTRACTED TO POWER, MAX. PHYSICAL... POLITICAL... THE FEDS NOTICED IT FOLLOWIN' YOU.
U.S. ARMY

YOU USED ME FOR BAIT, "GET THE TRUTH OUT, MAX!" WHATTA LINE!
WHAT'CHA EXPECT FROM A -:KFF:- CROOK?
WE'LL HANDLE THIS FROM HERE, MISTER. SOON AS OUR MEDIC CLEARS YOU, YOU'RE GOING HOME.
BUT...
FIRST AID
A MAN IN YOUR POSITION'S GOT A LOT OF RESPONSIBILITY, MAX, ESPECIALLY IN THIS ATOMIC AGE.
A STORY LIKE THIS MIGHT FRIGHTEN THE WRONG PEOPLE.
KNOWLEDGE IS POWER, MAX. USE IT WISELY.
MAX HK
"IN OTHER WORDS, TOOLEY... /'YOU'RE LUCKY WE LET YOU LIVE.'"
"SOUNDS LIKE VINCENZO LEARNED A LOT WHILE THE FEDS HAD HIM."
"TOO MUCH, TOOLEY. I DOUBT WE'LL HEAR FROM HIM AGAIN."
STILL -- HOW'D THAT THING USE A GRENADE BUT GET STUMPED BY A CAMERA?
MAYBE IT COULDN'T RELATE TO SOMETHING YA CAN'T FIGHT WITH. HM. SOUNDS HUMAN, HUH?
"GUESS I LIKE MY MONSTERS MINDLESS...
"BOY, I'LL MISS VINCENZO."
THE END

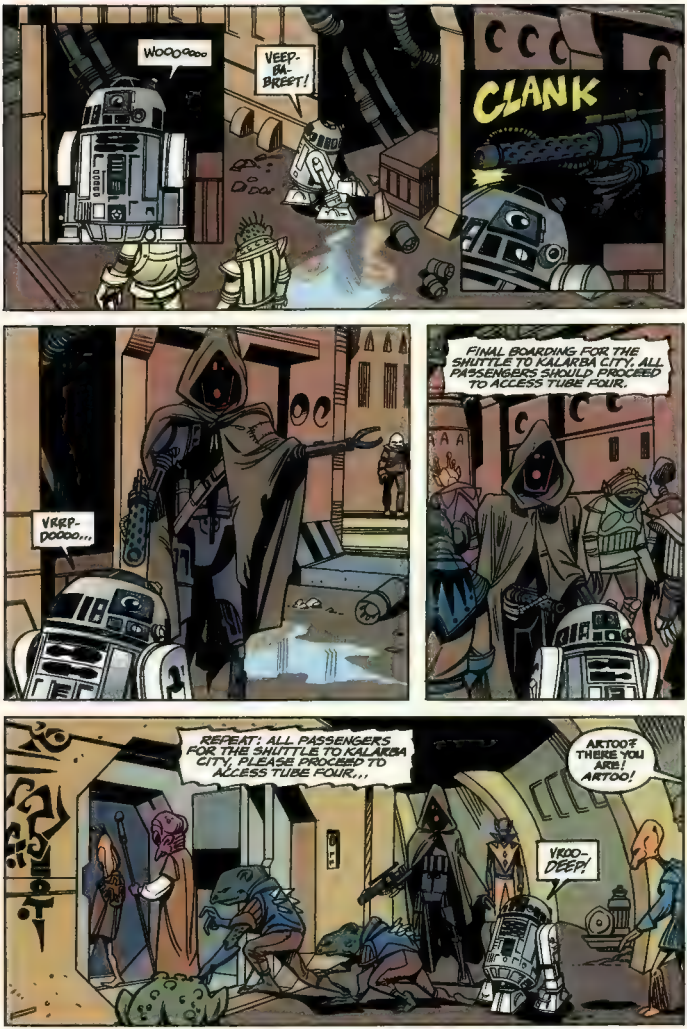

STAR WARS
DROIDS
I SIMPLY DON'T UNDERSTAND IT, SIR. ARTOO IS NORMALLY THE VERY PICTURE OF CO-OPERATION!
I MUST THANK YOU AGAIN, MASTER OLAG, FOR ALLOWING ME TO ASSIST YOU IN FINDING ARTOO AND THAT DREADFUL 16-88.
SAVE IT FOR THE SLAG-PILE, THREEPIO, AND STAY IN FRONT! IF 16-88 COMES OUT FIRING, I WANT YOU BETWEEN US!
GRONK!
FROM WHAT YOU'VE SAID, SIR, I'D VENTURE THAT VILE BATTLEDROID IS LONG GONE BY NOW.

YOU HAD BETTER BE WRONG. IF IG-88 HAS ALREADY LEFT HOSK STATION...

...YOU AND YOUR LITTLE FRIEND WILL REPLACE HIM IN THE DROID ARENA!
WOOOOO...


TAK
BREEP?

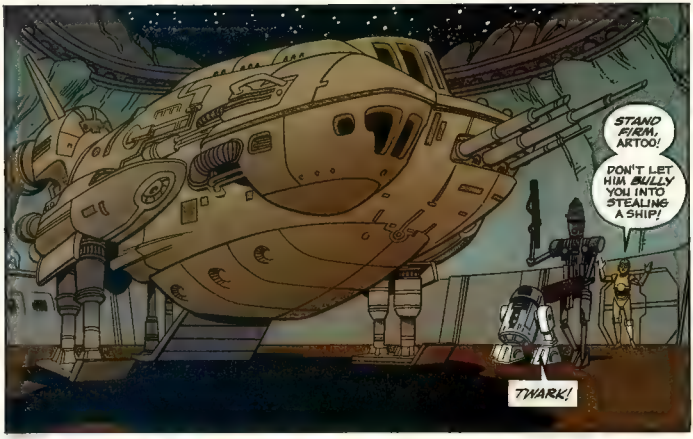
CLIKT-CLIKT-WHIRR
BZZZT-ZZZT

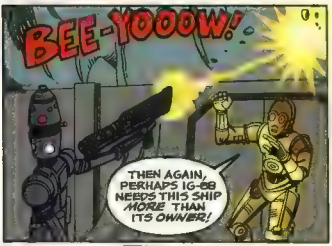

WOOOOOOO
VEEP-BA-BREEP!
CLANK
VREP-DOOOO...
FINAL BOARDING FOR THE SHUTTLE TO KALARBA CITY. ALL PASSENGERS SHOULD PROCEED TO ACCESS TUBE FOUR.
REPEAT: ALL PASSENGERS FOR THE SHUTTLE TO KALARBA CITY, PLEASE PROCEED TO ACCESS TUBE FOUR...
ARTOO? THERE YOU ARE! ARTOO!
VROO-DEEP!

OVER HERE, ARTOO!
THERE HE IS, XOB! SHOOT!
GRUNK?
IG-88, IN THE CLOAK, YOU IDIOT! SHOOT!
OH, ARTOO! THANK GOOD-NESS!
TWEE-VEEP!
BLZZT
DUCK? WHAT DO YOU MEAN, DUCK?
AAAAH!
CHOOM!
KLANK

TAK
TAK
TAK
HAH! GOT HIM!
YOU MORE THAN LIVE UP TO YOUR REPUTATION, IG-88. WHAT A FINE *FEATURED ATTRACTION* YOU WILL BE IN THE ARENA!
XOB! CART THIS THING AWAY, AND MAKE SURE HIS *SENSORY RECOVERY MODULE* IS DISCONNECTED THIS TIME!
PSSHH
BH?!
PTOOO

TURN ON THE EXHAUST VENTS, HURRY!
OH DEAR!
FFWWOOSH
ARTOO, WHERE ARE YOU? MY PHOTORECEPTORS ARE SCRAMBLED!
KAF! KAF!
GACK!
PWA-TWOOT!
IG-88 HAS TAKEN ARTOO INTO THE ACCESS TUBE!
HE RIPPED A CARBONITE CONSTRICTOR NET TO SHREDS!
STOP! HALT!
WHIRR R
KA-CHIK!
BLAST! HE'S TRYING TO STEAL A SHIP! READY MY CRUISER IN BAY SEVEN!


STAND FIRM, ARTOO!
DON'T LET HIM BULLY YOU INTO STEALING A SHIP!
TWARK!


BEE-YOOOW!
THEN AGAIN, PERHAPS IG-88 NEEDS THIS SHIP MORE THAN ITS OWNER!

I AGREE! IF WE REMAIN ON HOTH, MASTER OLAG WILL SURELY GIVE US A MEMORY-WIPE FOR HELPING A ROGUE BATTLE-DROID.
DEET TWA-VEEP DOOT!

THERE HE GOES, XOB! BRING HIM DOWN— OPERATIONAL OR NOW OPER-ATIONAL.
...BUT A MEMORY WIPE MIGHT BE PREFERABLE TO THIS!
WOOoOooo...

CONTINUED...

COMMENTS

10956 SE MAIN ST, MILWAUKIE, OR 97222

Bzzrt!** Edward Martin III here, interrupting your comic book for these vital testimonials from human beings across this great planet. Well, actually, just the U.S., but I like to keep my fingers crossed that if we do have any fans of this book overseas (or over borders), they'll write in and say "hello," or, as we say in the business, ***-***-**-**--!*

"You folks know what the heck you are doing..."

Dear Randy, Edward, & folks,

Hmm... Interesting assortment of stories here in ***DHC*** #14. My reaction to them was not what I expected when I began reading this. I was surprised and maybe you will be as well.

The Mark: "Taking Back the Streets," part 1: Unusual story, I thought. No superheroes and no licensed characters. This was good. The art was quite intriguing. I think I see a strong Steve Ditko influence in some of the panels where there are close shots of faces, but not at all on street scenes and outside shots. Strange, no? I am curious as to where this story will end so I will definitely be back next time to find out. I liked the dialogue. Not overblown at all, but very "real" sounding. Good job by all concerned on this story.

Predator: "Bad Blood," part 3: Hey! For once there was a clear victory here. By the Predator? No! It seems that way on first reading, but the indomitable and defiant spirit of man shows through to the end. Oh, the human loses his life, sure. However, he does not give up all the way to the bitter end, even to the point of spitting in the Predator's face immediately before what he must know will be hideous death. A fine, fine job by Evan Dorkin on the writing, and a terrific job on the art by Derek and Ande.

The Thing from Another World: "Questionable Research," part 2: The fight between science at any cost or risk and ethics is going to have to come to a screaming halt now, literally, I am sure! The two opposing sides will have to unite to save their own lives and here is where the tale will be truly told. I am intrigued by this story and am looking forward to seeing where this will lead. I loved John Campbell's original short story that all this comes from and this seems to be riding in the same spirit of the telling

This issue of ***DHC*** was damned good, I think. The balance is here between the licensed characters and original characters. I like that. You folks know what the heck you are doing as far as I am concerned. Great work guys and I will be looking forward to many more issues of this quality. I know you won't let me down. Until next time...

Carl Pietrantonio
517 Idylwood Lane
Laredo, TX 78041
Compuserve # 70621, 2514

No superheroes in **The Mark***? But The Mark is a superhero! Wait a minute... I'm so confused. What planet is this? I hope you're equally attracted to our new four-issue* **Mark** *miniseries, continuing this cool and stylistic adventure.*

I'm glad you liked the balance in this issue, Carl. As I've said before, Randy and I are trying to keep **DHC** *as interesting as possible, without resorting to polybagging each issue with an actual working spaceship and laser gun.*

Hey Ed,

I hope Randy makes it back okay. Now let's review.

The Mark: "Taking Back the Streets" was good, but failed to really grab my attention. Sorry. I did enjoy Brad Rader's art, however. I also enjoyed his work on DC's *Batman Adventures* title.

Predator: "Bad Blood" was entertaining, but let's get some more plot development and less graphic violence in the upcoming ***Bad Blood*** miniseries. I'm eagerly awaitng Chris Warner's inks on the series, but when will he pencil something again?

Lastly, **The Thing from Another World**: "Questionable Research" is excellent. If Marion's figures are correct, then MacReady better bust his hump and track down the last incarnations of The Thing in the upcoming ***Eternal Vows*** miniseries before it's too late. Ted Naifeh and "Moose" Baumann's art is impressive, but I'm really looking forward to Paul Gulacy's rendition of the critter. Keep it up and I'll see ya when I see ya.

Robert Knaus
320 Fisher Street
Walpole, MA 02081

Well Robert, Randy made it back okay, so the world is safe. However, I can never listen to Gilbert Gottfried again without feeling a twinge of fear and desperation. But those images are easily banished by concentration exercises I learned in my Kung-Gami *class (the ancient art of self-defense using weapons made of folded paper).*

I hope the introduction of the C.I.A. in the **Predator: Bad Blood** *miniseries is enough plot for you. I know it's too much for me. Frankly, once the C.I.A. gets involved in a game, it's a sure bet that if there are any winners, we won't find out for about thirty years. And then, only if Oliver Stone makes a film about it. An Oliver Stone Predator film? Now* that's *graphic!*

Dear Randy and Edward,

The re-introduction of The Mark in ***DHC*** #14 led into another enjoyable issue. Your plans for 1994 are what I'm really looking forward to, though. 1993 introduced Legend, ***Comics' Greatest World***, the ***Universal Monsters*** license, and more ***Star Wars***. I can only imagine what you have planned for what could easily become the year of the Dark Horse.

Dark Horse Comics proves how entertaining the anthology book can be, even in this modern era of 8-part slugfests. "Taking Back the Streets," featuring The Mark, though, was the best story of the issue. When I first heard that Brad Rader of "Batman: The Animated Series" was going to be drawing a Dark Horse comic, there was excitement in the air, which all paid off. This 12-page segment introduced me to the world of ***The Mark***, a different take on superheroes than what you're currently brewing with ***CGW***. This story was more a tale of spies and political intrigue, but with an element enjoyable to any action fan and anybody who loves a good

mystery. Mike Barr has lately been stretching to show versatility in his work: First he shows the right way to tell of masked vigilantes. Then, Mike abandons it all for the fantasy of an ages-old war and its hero/heroine, the strange Mantra. Now Mike has taken his work to the next level, and I cannot wait for the miniseries. Seeing more of The Mark himself, though, should be the next priority. And despite my raves, it's Rader's art that makes *The Mark*. His cartoon/superhero hybrid, enhanced by the fantastic coloring, is thrilling and especially his take on the lead character's costume. This is visual candy!

One thing in the letters page that I noticed was the trend to specifically comment on how ***DHC*** should run in the future. One function it seems to be serving quite well is that of introducing miniseries with lead-ins. Although there is extreme value in one-shots about the unexplored characters that you have in your stable (say, a story with the point-of-view of the Wolfman or something!), these lead-ins are proving enjoyable such as Predator this issue. Evan Dorkin's warped sense of humor shone through in this final sequence, and I have nothing but praise for Derek and Ande's artwork. While Predator will never be one of my A-list characters, it's great to see talented folks doing their magic on this guy. Maybe the proposed Superman crossover could do the job, though...

Finally, ***The Thing from Another World*** worked like 1950s magic. A strength in the script was that I could easily picture this all as a film, from the dialogue to the locale and situation. This rarely occurs, but as the story was being read, my mind was painting pictures of a cast playing out roles. This is definitely a great story, but I'd like to see ***DHC*** tackle a film-noir horror comic shortly. The science element in this story also played a great part. Ted and Moose's artwork was also a thrill, and especially in Ted's case, more work should be on the horizon.

The cover by Jim Rohn was also fantastic, and even reminded me of Rader's interiors. The stark image of The Mark standing on the rooftops of a corrupted city as time runs out and his image colors the sky will stay with me for a while. Thanks for your time, and don't let the fun stop here. ***DHC*** is the best showcase... period... for licensed features, but how about ***Nexus***, ***CGW***, or even a Legend preview? See you in 30!

Joey Marchese
P.O. Box 2197
Union, NJ 07083-2197

What? A proposed Superman crossover? From who? From where? Okay, I know what happened. Someone slipped me a Mickey Finn and when I awoke, you're all talking about Superman crossovers, political anti-superheroes and how come Pop-Tarts® come two in a pack when there's only one per serving. If reality has ever torn free of any moorings it once had, now's the time. Look, I'll explain this just once. Thumbnail plot of any Superman/Predator crossover (of which there are none that I know of):

Predator: *Raarrr!*
Superman: *Go on, shoo!*
SFX: *Whap!*
Predator (small balloon):
...whimper...

And that's it. It's not like there's much of a contest, you know? Predator vs. Felix the Cat, *however, might have some potential...*

If you're looking for a **Nexus** *or Legend story, aside from rounding up the usual suspects, of which we publish many, check out* **Dark Horse Presents** *#80 (shipped last December, but there still might be copies around) for Arthur Adams' "Monkeyman & O'Brien" and* **Dark Horse Presents** *#84 (shipping April 12, 1994!) for "Showdown at the Texas-Style Chili Corral," written by Mike Baron and illustrated by the unparalleled Dan Barry. And keep your receiver pointed this way, too, as more action's coming up soon in the pages of* **DHC**!

"Your stuff is better than the movies they are based on."

Dear Dark Horse Comments,

I am a big fan of anthology comics and your ***Dark Horse Comics*** is my favorite

I've just read #1-14 (I was a little behind), and the stories have all been good or great. All the *Predator* strips have been great, the two best being "The Pride at Nghasa" and "Bad Blood." The stories were realistic. (I know I would run like hell, too!!) No macho human kicking butt on the Predators.

The ***Aliens*** strip was good, as were the ***Bond***, ***Godzilla***, and ***RoboCop*** strips, but you outdid yourself on ***Mad Dogs***, ***X***, and ***Tales of the Jedi*** I look forward to more of ***The Mark*** and ***The Thing from Another World***, the latter of which I'm a huge fan. Renegade was unusual, but a good story anyway.

Some people writing to you say to cut out your licensed material from this comic. I say *no way man*! Your stuff is better than the movies they are based on.

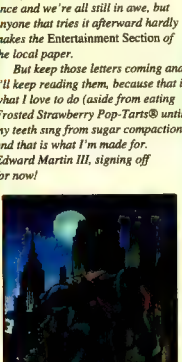
In my opinion, you're making one of the best comics on the market.

I ride the Dark Horse.

Robert Earl Shepard
907 Trinity Avenue
Cleburne, TX 76031

I can't help it! Common decency and common sense demands that you, Robert Earl Shepard, of Cleburne, Texas, must be awarded the prize for Letter of the Month. *You read all fourteen issues* straight*?! Holy smokes! Isn't there a law or something that forbids activity like that? I know Texas is pretty progressive, but my head is still reeling. Yow! Your prize, should you choose to accept it, is a* **Special Limited Edition** *copy of* **Comics' Greatest World #1, X**. *Now, because I know there aren't too many issues of* **Dark Horse Comics** *published, I'm not going to be impressed by this feat anymore. It's like the world record on eating a bicycle. Sure it was done once and we're all still in awe, but anyone that tries it afterward hardly makes the* Entertainment Section *of the local paper.*

But keep those letters coming and I'll keep reading them, because that is what I love to do (aside from eating Frosted Strawberry Pop-Tarts® until my teeth sing from sugar compaction) and that is what I'm made for. Edward Martin III, signing off for now!



Next month, strap in and hold on, because **Dark Horse Comics** *is about to catapult you back to Arcadia and the mysterious vigilante known only as X with "Welcome to the Jungle," a stunning new tale of deceit, doublecross, and revenge! Also, we bring you the exciting conclusions of "Alien" and* **Star Wars**: *"Droids."*

Don't miss **Dark Horse Comics** *#19, shipping March 29, 1994!*

–Edward

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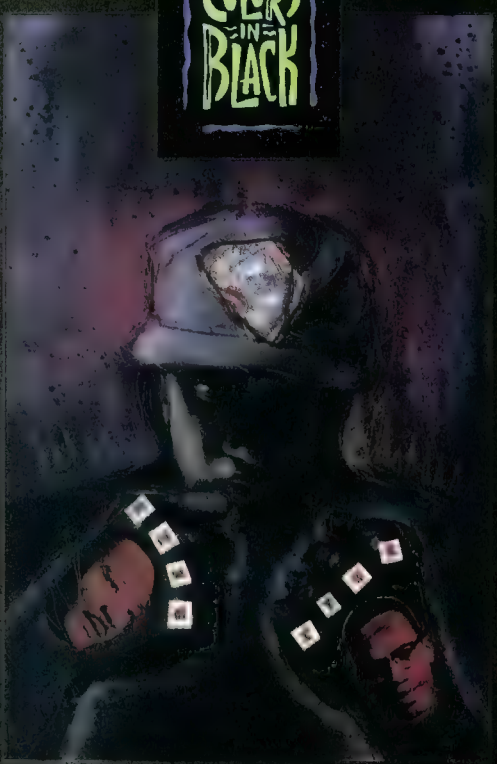

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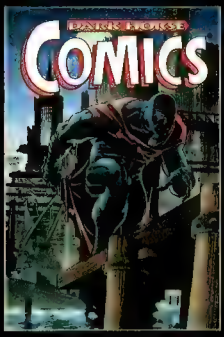

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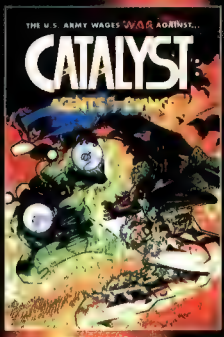

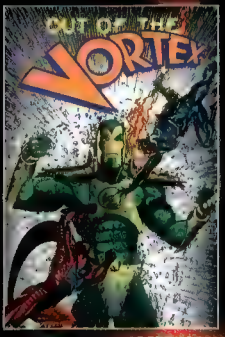

OUT OF THE VORTEX #6

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FINISH LINE

Last month I gave you an example of the interactive nature of comics stories: the way words and pictures interact—with each other and with the readers' own sets of expectations—to create a sense of reality and action in the readers' minds. To me, this has always been one of the most exciting aspects of the medium, and has made this job enjoyable even during times of high stress and impending deadline doom.

I thought this month I'd let some of the top creators in comics explain what it is about comics that attracted them in the first place, and what keeps them interested in the medium year after year. Specifically, I asked, "Why comics? Why not write novels or screenplays, or draw storyboards or commercial art, or produce 'Fine Art'?" I started out with the two writer/artists primarily responsible for the creation of the new **Legend** imprint, **John Byrne** and **Frank Miller**.

Byrne, creator/writer/artist of ***Next Men*** and the new ***Danger Unlimited*** series, had this to say about why he loves comics: "Producing a comic book—writing and drawing one on your own—is a lot like making a movie for which you design all of the sets, play all of the parts, *and* get to direct. The advantage is that you have actors who never miss their cues. I'd say having that control is a major reason I work in comics."

Miller, creator/writer/artist of ***Sin City*** and the co-creator/writer of the upcoming ***Martha Washington Goes to War*** and ***The Big Guy and Rusty the Boy Robot*** series, echoed Byrne's comments regarding control of his own creations: "I grew up reading and loving comics, and I loved to write and draw my own. I knew from when I was young that comics were what I wanted to do. One of the most enjoyable things about comics is the amazing amount of freedom you have compared to other mediums. Plus, it's an egomaniac's dream to be in control of the whole production."

Obviously, there is a great deal to be said for having the freedom to pursue one's own vision without having it diluted or altered by others. But what about those creators who, for one reason or another, choose to work as part of a collaborative team as either a writer or an artist? I tracked down a couple of top writers, **Chris Claremont** and **Steven Grant**, to get their points of view.

Claremont, whose work can be seen every other month in ***Aliens/Predator: The Deadliest of the Species***, had this to say about what first attracted him to comics: "I started out writing prose and wandered into comics after the fact. It looked like it was a lot of fun, and seemed like the next best thing to making movies. Working in comics has some of the same excitement as improvisational theater—or a tennis game. The interaction between writer and artist is very visceral and immediate. Writing prose, you work alone."

Grant, who is writing ***X*** and the upcoming miniseries ***Enemy***, took things a bit further in explaining the differences between comics and prose, and comics and motion pictures: "I like the visual aspects of comics, but I also like the literary, or prose aspects. Comics are a very strange form—a combination of words and pictures, not one or the other. When you're writing comics, you're required to think visually, but the finished work is not simply visual. It's a unique balance between prose and picture that you don't find in any other medium, and it allows for a whole different level of expression.

"A lot of people think comics are 'movies on paper,' and that's dead wrong. They're something unique all to themselves, and I believe the medium itself is still in the process of defining itself—still in the process of being born."

To get an artist's perspective, I went to **Cam Kennedy**, the artist on ***Star Wars: Dark Empire***, and the recently released *Batman/Judge Dredd: Judgment on Gotham*. Kennedy touched on the same pleasures to be found in collaboration as Chris Claremont, but he also brought up an aspect that directly involves you, the comics reader: "I worked as a painter in France for seven years, and dearly loved it. But when I came back to Scotland, I got involved with comics and found it was a wonderfully fast medium for me to turn the ideas inside my head into something tangible. Comics also gave me a chance to work with people who would come up with ideas that seemed completely irrational—until you began to think about them and put them on paper, and discovered that they could work.

"Another thing I've always loved is the feedback from fans. Comics give people an awful lot of pleasure, and meeting fans at conventions allows you to see that firsthand. To get that kind of feedback from doing a professional job is a great thing."

He's absolutely right, you know. Your comments to creators, either face to face at conventions, or through the mail, are a way to bring the interactive nature of comic books full circle, from creator to reader to creator. So complete the circle, write to your favorite comics creator(s). Get out there and interact.

—Randy Stradley
creative director

FEB. CHECKLIST

SHIPPING FEBRUARY 1
- ☐ ROBOCOP: ROULETTE #3

SHIPPING FEBRUARY 8
- ☐ ATLAS #1
- ☐ CARAVAN KIDD VALENTINE'S DAY SPECIAL #1
- ☐ DARK HORSE PRESENTS #82
- ☐ NINA'S NEW & IMPROVED ALL-TIME GREATEST COLLECTORS' ITEM CLASSIC COMICS #3
- ☐ OUT OF THE VORTEX #5
- ☐ THE THING FROM ANOTHER WORLD: ETERNAL VOWS #3
- ☐ VERSION #2.7

SHIPPING FEBRUARY 15
- ☐ AGE OF REPTILES #4
- ☐ ALIENS: VOLUME 2 #21 (U.K. EDITION)
- ☐ ALIENS: MUSIC OF THE SPEARS #2
- ☐ DARK HORSE INSIDER #26
- ☐ GRENDEL TALES: DEVIL'S HAMMER #1
- ☐ INDIANA JONES AND THE ARMS OF GOLD #1
- ☐ THE MARK #3
- ☐ MAX OVERLOAD #1
- ☐ STAR WARS: TALES OF THE JEDI #5

SHIPPING FEBRUARY 22
- ☐ CATALYST: AGENTS OF CHANGE #1
- ☐ COLORS IN BLACK #1
- ☐ DANGER UNLIMITED #1
- ☐ DARK HORSE COMICS #18
- ☐ ENEMY #3
- ☐ THE GEOF DARROW PRINT SERIES #2: HARD BOILED
- ☐ HELLHOUNDS #1
- ☐ PREDATOR: BAD BLOOD #3
- ☐ THE SHADOW: IN THE COILS OF THE LEVIATHAN #3

SHIPPING MARCH 1
- ☐ CLASSIC STAR WARS #17
- ☐ INDIANA JONES: THUNDER IN THE ORIENT #6
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